

Message Text

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ACTION PM-07

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-25 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 CIAE-00

INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 INRE-00 EB-11 SS-20 NSC-10

DRC-01 /096 W

----- 042247

O R 081120Z JAN 74

FM AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

TO COMIDEASTFOR IMMEDIATE

USS KOELSCH IMMEDIATE

USS BUMBY IMMEDIATE

SECSTATE WASHDC 5012

INFO CCECLANT FLT NORFOLK VA

CNO WASHDC

CINIZSNAVEUR LONDON UK

NAF NAPLES IT

C O N F I D E N T I A L NAIROBI 156

E.O.11652: GDS

TAGS: MILI KE

SUBJECT: U.S. SHIP VISITS SPO MOMBASA

REF: :(A) COMIDEASTFOR 071920Z JAN. 74

(B) NAIORBI 00127

(C) COMIDEASTFOR 301440Z DEC. 73

(D) NAIROBI 0106

SMTRLTEGRET THAT REFNB SETTING FORTH MIDEASTFOR EMPLOYMENT
SCHEDULE WAS MISINTERPRETED BY OUR CURRENT LIAISON
MWFICER WHO TOOK "BSF" TO MEAN OFFSHORE REFUELING BY
NAVY OILER. HAD WE REALIZED THAT PORTIFWLLS AND BUNKERING
WERE INVOLVED, WE WOULD HAVE QUESTIONED POLITICAL
DESIRABILITY THESE TWO ADDITIONAL VISITS WHEN REF C RECEIVED LAST
WEEK.

2. SINCE REF A STATDB BRUMBY JANUARY 10 PORT CALL NOW
REQUIRED BECAUSE OF "EMERGENCY," WE HAVE JUST REQUESTED
GOK PERMISSION ON THIS BASIS. WE CANNOT PROMISE THAT WE
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WILL BE SUCCESSFUL WITHIN THIS TIME FRAME, BUT WILL DO OUR

BEST.

3. AVAILABILITY OF FUEL REPORTED IN REF D REMAINS SUBJECT TO AUTHORIZATION BY BRITISH PETROLEUM HEADQUARTERS IN LONDON. MOMBASA BP REP IS SEEKING PERMISSION FROM LONDON TO SELL FUEL AGAINST NAVY CONTRACT AND WILL ADVISE EMBASSY SOONEST.

4. ASSUME THAT COMIDEASTFOR WILL WITHDRAW REQUEST FOR SECOND REFUELING STOP OF USS KOELSCH AS RECOMMENDED IN REF B. WE CAN HARDLY CLAIM AS "EMERGENCY" WHEN KOELSCH WILL HAVE BEEN AWAY FROM MOMBASA ONLY ONE WEEK. MOREOVER, EXCESSIVE BUNKERING BY US NAVAL VESSELS IN MOMBASA IS POTENTIALLY OF EVEN GREATER CURRENT POLITICAL SENSITIVITY IN KENYA THAN PORT VISIT AS SUCH BECAUSE OF GROWING KENYAN FEARS OF FUEL SHORTAGE. KENYA'S FOREIGN MINISTER MUNGAI IS CURRENTLY ENROUTE TO SAUDI ARABIA AND POSSIBLY OTHER ARAB COUNTRIES TO ASK FOR SPECIAL CONCESSIONS RE SUPPLY AND PRICE. APRIL VISIT BY BRUMBY PER REF C PRESENTS NO PROBLEM.

5. WHILE WE APPRECIATE FUING AND OTHER OPERATIONAL PROBLEMS OF COMIDEASTFOR, WE MUST REITERATE THAT OUR PRIMARY INTEREST IS IN KEEPING PORT OF MOMBASA OPEN TO REASONABLE NUMBER OF VISITS BY US NAVAL VESSELS. IF WE ATTEMPT TO MAKE SUCH CALLS TOO FREQUENTLY, WE RISK STRENGTHENING HAND OF THOSE WITHIN GOK WHO OPPOSE ANY US NAVAL PRESENCE IN INDIAN OCEAN*BY ENABLING THEM TO ARGUE FREQUENT US NAVY VISITS TO MOMBASA INCONSISTENT WITH KENYA'S OFFICIALLY PRO-ARAB AND NON-ALIGNED POSTURE. IT IS INCONCEIVABLE TO US THAT COMIDEASTFOR IS IN BETTER POSITION TO JUDGE POLITICAL SENSITIVITIES KENYANS ON THIS SUBJECT THAN THIS EMBASSY. KENYAN NAVY IS INDEED (AS STATED REF A) SYMPATHETIC TO US NAVY PORT CALLS, BUT THIS MINISCULE PART OF KENYAN ARMED FORCES, WHICH IS COMMANDED BY LT. COLONEL, IS OF NO RPT NO POLITICAL SIGNIFICANCE WITHIN GOK.

6. HOWEVER, RATHER THAN HAVING INCREASINGLY FREQUENT TELEGRAPHIC DEBATES BETWEEN COMIDEASTFOR AND THIS EMBASSY
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ON KENYAN POLITICS, IT MAY BE PREFERABLE TO WORK OUT AGREED STATE-DOD GUIDELINES RE PERMISSABLE NUMBER OF US NAVY SHIP VISITS TO MOMBASA PER YEAR AND FREQUENCY AT WHICH SUCH VISITS CAN TAKE PLACE. WE HAD HOPED TO AVOID THIS MECHANISTIC APPROACH TO PROBLEM, BUT BELIEVE THAT THIS MAY NOW BE ONLY PRACTICAL WAY OF DEALING WITH SITUATION. WOULD APPRECIATE STATE DEPARTMENT COMMENTS ON FEASIBILITY OF FORMULATING SUCH GUIDELINES.

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